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Attorney's Docket No : 8128 (Z-03361)
(formerly 00216-658001)

Remarks

The independent claims are claims 1, 34, 65, 99 and 103. The pending claims are 1-24 and 24-103. The allowance of independent claims 34 and 65 is acknowledged with appreciation, along with claims 54-59, 66-68 and 88-92. It is noted that dependent claims 28 -29 had been amended in the previous Amendment to add punctuation (a period) since those claims lacked punctuation.

Claim 1 (and also claim 99) are amended to overcome the objection noted to claim 1 that the phrase "said leading elastomer portion" at line 15 lacks proper antecedent; thus at line 14 the word "elastomer" is added between "leading" and "portion" to provide better antecedent basis for the remainder of the claim. Although Claim 99 was not objected to for like reasons, it is similarly amended for clarity.

Claim 3 is amended to more precisely point out that each side surface has a respective outwardly directed exterior surface.

Claim 102 is amended to recite "the two" instead of "both" exterior side surfaces; sufficient antecedence is seen in its base claim 34 which recites extending over "at least one of the exterior side surfaces".

The foregoing amendments are made to more particularly point out the invention but not to narrow the claims.

The rejections of claim 103 are mooted by the present Amendment; however, the rejection of previous claim 103 under §112, ¶ 1 is respectfully traversed, since support is shown e.g. in Figure 23 that the elastomer covers the upper surface of the housing forward of a projection of the connection structure (e.g. pivot 70) onto e.g. plane 122. The rejection of claim 103 under §112, ¶ 2 is also respectfully traversed since it is believed clear and understandable that the elastomer covers substantially an entire upper housing surface --as seen in the width direction going from rear to front-- from forward of the connection structure (e.g. pivot 70) (as seen in projection onto the width axis) to a forwardmost position of the shaving unit, indicated in Figure

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23 over the extent W_f . However, these rejections of claim 103 are moot in that this feature is deleted and a different feature added, as discussed hereinbelow.

Examiner is thanked for the courtesy of a short telephone conference on October 24, 2006 to introduce the amendments presented herein to claim 1 and 103 to overcome the art rejections, which Examiner indicated she would consider.

Claim 103 is amended to add the portion of the features of claim 65 that was understood to have resulted in the allowance of claim 65. The last paragraph of claim 103 is deleted and instead the feature is added that in the forward region where the elastomeric member overhangs the housing, the elastomeric member tapers, over the distance from the sides to the center, from thicker at the sides to thinner at the center region of the guard. Amended claim 103 is believed allowable over the cited U.S. Pat. 5,249,361 (Apprille).

The rejection of claim 1 is respectfully traversed. Claim 1 was rejected as anticipated under §102(b) Apprille Pat. 5,249,361. It is respectfully believed that the rejection is based on a misunderstanding of the term "width" as used in the present specification. The term "width" is understood in the front to rear of the cartridge direction, or as viewed on the cited Apprille '361 reference from left to right of the page as holding Figure 7 at the normal reading direction, or e.g. as a plane could be drawn intersecting the tips of the blades or the elastomeric fins. The term "width axis" direction had already been defined in claim 1 at lines 11-13. The term "thickness" is understood roughly in the "height of the elastomeric fins" direction. It is believed that Examiner misapprehended width for the thickness direction. With this understanding, it is clear that in Apprille '361 of the elastomeric guard, the width (e.g. "front to rear" direction) of the rear portion of the elastomer that is supported by the housing structure (it encompasses approximately the rear 4 fins worth as seen in Fig. 7) is much greater than the width of the unsupported ("leading portion") that overhangs beyond a front portion of the housing (about 1 fin worth of

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distance as seen in Fig. 7). To even more particularly point out the subject matter, Claim 1 is amended to recite "along said width axis" when referring to the width at two occurrences in the last two lines of the claim. Claim 99 is similarly amended. Claims 1 and 99 are thus believed allowable.

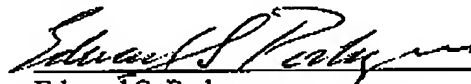
It is pointed out that no rejection was made on Apprille '361 although this reference was already earlier of record in the form of its Reissue Certificate RE 36,816 having been in the I.D.S. filed March 2, 2005, initialed and considered by Examiner with the first Office Action. Thus, and since it is believed that the present rejection of claim 1 was based on a misunderstanding, it is respectfully requested that the indication of "final" rejection be removed and the present Amendment entered even if in Examiner's view it does not lead to allowance of all claims.

Since the withdrawn claims are dependent on generic claims that are either allowed or believed allowable, it is requested that upon allowance of their base claims they be rejoined in the present application.

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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